



MĀNOA VALLEY  
CHURCH

# Mānoa Connection

Connecting our 'ohana

eNewsletter

April 1, 2026

## MISSIONS Moments

### MVC Mission Talks – Sessions 1 & 2 Recap and Invitation

by Pastor EJ Ravago




Pastor EJ


Over two sessions, we've taken time as a church to step back and ask a foundational question: *What is the mission of the church?* In our first session, we were reminded that the church does not create its own mission. Rather, the church joins the mission of God. From creation to new creation, Scripture reveals a God who continually moves toward the world in love, not withdrawing from what is broken but entering into it, redeeming and restoring all that has been fractured. This means mission is not something we add to church life; it is the very story we have been drawn into, a living participation in God's ongoing work in the world. This means mission is not a program or a department of church life. It is part of our identity. We are a people sent by Jesus.



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We recognized three ways this mission takes shape: the **Great Commission** (Matthew 28), in which we are sent to make disciples; the **Great Commandment** (Matthew 22), through which we are formed by love of God and neighbor; and the **Great Community** (Acts 2), where we embody the gospel together in shared life. These are not separate priorities to be balanced, but one integrated life. When held together, they offer a fuller, more faithful picture of what it means to participate in God's work in the world.

In our second session, we built on that foundation by exploring how *evangelism* and *justice work* fit into this larger vision. Too often, these are treated as competing emphases. But we saw that they are distinct and inseparable. Evangelism is bearing witness to Jesus in word, naming Christ and inviting others into faith. Justice work is love made visible expressed through compassion, mercy, and care for those in need. Both belong within the Great Commission, the Great Commandment, and the life of the church together. Our witness is both spoken and lived.



Members and friends gather to discuss "What is the mission of the church?"

As we look ahead to our third session, we'll turn to a deeply important question: *What do we mean by conversion?* We'll explore this through the lives of two apostles, Paul and Peter, whose experiences invite us to consider the breadth of how God draws people to Himself. Their stories are both faithful, yet not identical, and that difference matters. How we understand conversion shapes how we understand faith, discipleship, and even how we recognize God at work in one

another's lives. We hope you'll join us as we continue to deepen our understanding of how God brings people into life with Christ and how we participate in that work together here in Mānoa. See you after service in the Upper Room on April 19!

Mahalo, Pastor EJ

## Peace and Justice Report

Did you know that the United Church of Christ (UCC) is very active in working toward Peace and Social Justice? For example, the UCC has long affirmed that housing is a fundamental human right. To learn more about this issue and find out how to write to your congressperson see the [UCC Office of Public Policy and Advocacy newsletter](#).



The Justice and Peace Action Network (JPAN) is the UCC denomination's grassroots advocacy network. To learn more about and become a part of JPAN, click on this [LINK](#). There is information on justice for children, public education, civil and human rights, just peacemaking, economic justice, environmental and global concerns, health, racial justice, women, and worker justice. By clicking on the above JPAN link, you can learn about each of these areas, read UCC's positions, sign up for workshops, advocate, and pray. We can do something, even from our own homes!

## Invitation to Help a Worthy Cause



Inga Park Okuna, Susan Shiraki, Rose Niimoto and Richelle Fujioka load the van with donations.

We will once again be bringing dinners to the parents and children in the Family Promise Program on **Thursday, April 23, 2026**. This program has helped hundreds of families find safe and secure long term housing. We are so grateful for the opportunity to help them make a difference for Hawaii's most vulnerable: our keiki!

Your food donation can be a main dish, a salad, some fruit, rice, and/or dessert for five (or more) people. If you feel called to contribute, please sign up using the link below. Bring your food to the church parking lot between 5-5:10 p.m. on April 23. Thank you for sharing God's love and blessings! If you have questions, contact **Inga Park Okuna** at [ingaparkokuna@gmail.com](mailto:ingaparkokuna@gmail.com)

[4/23/26 SIGN UP](#)

## Missions Committee Continues to Provide Monthly Meals for Two Organizations



Inga Park Okuna delivers dinner to the Family Promise facility.



Inga delivers sandwiches in colorful paper sacks to the Keauhou Shelter.

## Staying Safe in Your Inbox by Alan S. Ito What is “Phishing” – and Why Should You Care?

Phishing (pronounced “fishing”) is when a bad actor sends you an email pretending to be someone you know or trust – your bank, your pastor, the IRS, or a family member – to trick you into giving up personal or sensitive information, money, or to “click” on a link or download a malicious program.



These emails can look surprisingly real. They may have familiar logos or graphics and or official sounding language. They often convey a sense of urgency designed to make you act before you think.

### Red Flags: Signs an Email is a Scam

- Urgent Language – “Your account will be CLOSED in 24 hours!” Bad actors create panic so you act without thinking. They try to elicit a response driven by your emotions.
- Requests for Personal or Sensitive Information – Your bank, Medicare, or the Social Security Administration will never ask for your password, Social Security number, or bank details by email.
- Suspicious Sender Email Address – The email name may say “Amazon” but the actual email address is something like, [support@amaz0n-helpdesk.ru](mailto:support@amaz0n-helpdesk.ru)
- Unexpected Prizes or Refunds – “You’ve won \$500!” or “You’re owed a refund – click here to claim it.” If you didn’t enter a contest, you didn’t win one.
- Strange Links – Hover over a link (don’t click!) and see if the actual email address looks odd or unrelated to who the email claims to be from.
- Poor Spelling and Grammar – While not as much of a sign today with AI, scam emails may contain obvious errors (misspellings, poor grammar). Legitimate companies proofread their communications carefully.
- Attachments You Didn’t Ask For – Unexpected attachments (even from known contacts) can contain malicious programs. Don’t open them unless you were expecting the file.

### Simple Steps that Keep You Safe

- When in Doubt, Don’t Click – If an email makes you nervous or seems off, close it.
- Call to Verify – If you get an alarming email from your bank, the doctor’s office, a family member, etc., close the email and call them to verify they sent the email. Use a phone number that you know or that you look up in the phone book. Never use a phone number sent in a suspicious email to verify the email itself.
- Use a Strong, Unique Password for Your Email – Your email account is the “master key” to everything else. A good password is at least 12 characters long and includes numbers, letters, and special characters. Don’t use words that can be found in a dictionary.
- Turn On Two-Step Verification – This means that even if someone gets your password, they still can’t get into your account without a code sent to your phone.
- Keep Your Software Updated – Updates often include security fixes. When your computer or phone asks you to update, say yes.
- Never Send Gift Cards as Payment – No legitimate company, government agency, or grandchild in trouble will ask you to pay with iTunes or Google Play gift cards. Someone asking you to pay with a gift card is always a scam.



## Helpful Hints:

- If an email elicits a strong emotional response, don't click on a link, open an attachment, respond, or otherwise take any action until you think through the email and message.
- It's easier to spot an email scam when you open it on a computer rather than on a mobile phone. Clues that may point to a scam email are often difficult to discern on a small phone screen.
- Don't rush through opening and responding to your emails. Think about what you're doing.

## Example:

From: Reverend Abraham Han <[pastormail28801@gmail.com](mailto:pastormail28801@gmail.com)>

Date: Thu, Mar, 2026, 6:22 AM

Subject: FAITH-BASED SUPPORT

To: <[roger.mvc.19@gmail.com](mailto:roger.mvc.19@gmail.com)>

Good morning Roger,

I am writing to inquire about your availability today to assist with a specific matter. As I am currently in a prayer session, I would prefer to communicate via email at this time.

Please let me know if you have the capacity to help, and I will provide further details shortly.

Blessings,

Reverend Abraham Han  
Senior Minister

Mānoa Valley Church

[2728 Huapala Street, Honolulu, HI 96822](https://www.manoavalleychurch.org)

[manoavalleychurch.org](https://www.manoavalleychurch.org)

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Romans 12:12

## Red/Yellow Flags:

1. While the From: line indicates "Reverend Abraham Han", the actual email address is [pastormail28801@gmail.com](mailto:pastormail28801@gmail.com). Email from Pastor Abe or other Mānoa Valley Church staff should come from the email domain [manoavalleychurch.org](https://www.manoavalleychurch.org).
2. The "signature line", "Reverend Abraham Han" is not how Pastor Abe typically "signs" his emails.
3. While not always there, many emails from Pastor Abe usually include the Mānoa Valley Church logo as part of the "signature block".

Stay Safe in Your Inbox!



Easter Services and Celebration



**Maundy Thursday** April 2 at 7pm



**Good Friday** April 3 at 7pm



**Easter Sunday** April 5 at 7 am and 10 am



April 5 from 11 am—1 pm

**Easter Floral Decorations Are Needed on Easter Sunday**

Please bring cut flowers or potted Easter lily plants to decorate our traditional floral cross and the chancel area. Thank you.

**Moderator’s Message** by Roger Au



Roger Au

A huge thank you and bravo to the Trustees! Their work is largely behind-the-scenes, but so important to Mānoa Valley Church. The Trustees are faithfully maintaining our campus, including the sanctuary, gym, and playground areas, which allows MVC to carry out its mission. While many projects don’t seem very exciting, they ensure that the facilities remain functional and usable.

There are many important repair projects this year. These include the abatement of lead paint on the gym ceiling, a major replacement and renovation of the playground for the childcare programs, and mold abatement in a few of the downstairs offices. There are also numerous smaller projects – installation of exterior lights around the sanctuary, repairing roof drains in both the sanctuary and gym, and the recurring repair of plumbing and electrical fixtures.



Date	Event
Apr. 6	FIT4LIFE session begins for 6 weeks
Apr. 12	Congregational Meeting after worship
Apr. 19	Sandwich making for Keauhou Shelter, 9 am., breezeway
Apr. 23	Family Promise dinner donations, 5-5:10 pm.
Apr. 19 and 26	Mission and Outreach conversations with Pastor EJ, after worship
Apr. 26	Aloha and Nominations Committee to provide snacks
May 2	e-Newsletter article deadline